

"WE SHOULD ERR ON THE SIDE OF SAFETY"

College News Conference at 1:00 P.M. over WMAL-TV (Washington)  
and ABC Television Network:

FOIAb3b

MODERATOR: Ruth Hagy.  
GUEST: Senator John Kennedy.  
Panel: Student editors.

SENATOR KENNEDY WAS SEEN ON THE TELEVISION SCREEN  
AS HE WAS INTERVIEWED BY THE PANEL OF STUDENTS.

QUESTION: "Senator Symington has led something of a frontal attack on the administration concerning the so-called misleading of the public concerning the American defense posture. In the first place, do you feel that the President is mis-leading the public in terms of this issue, and secondly do you think there might be an over-emphasis by the Democrats on war, rather than on peace, in this particular issue?"

KENNEDY: "Well I would say that I think the administration and the President reached his judgement in good faith--quite obviously he's not going to play with the security of the United States, but I do think it's extremely difficult to make a correct assessment with the precision as to what a dictatorship is doing. The British and French couldn't do it in the 30's we mis-calculated the speed with which they would develop the Russians, the atomic weapon, the hydrogen weapon, and missiles themselves. Therefore, I don't think that you can say that regardless of how broad and, --the information is that the CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY had, it is still limited in a dictatorship. I therefore think that you should err on the side of safety.

"When men who have the same information which the President has, such as Powers--General Powers--Ridgeway, Gavin and Taylor, come to exact opposite conclusions, say we are moving into a position of peril, I would err in the side of caution. I therefore would make a greater effort than this administration has indicated it's willing to make."

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